

→ Luma; files.

## **Middle Georgia College Honors Day**

Good morning. It is a pleasure to be with you on the campus of Middle Georgia College for this special ceremony. Let me add my personal congratulations to all of you who are being honored today. You earned the right to be here today on the basis of your personal initiative, hard work, and perserverance. Ralph Waldo Emerson once said, "The reward of a thing well done is to have done it." I agree with his sentiment, but also think, and think you will too, that a little recognition's not bad thing either.

Today we celebrate your individual accomplishments, but without detracting from any of these, we also should salute the contribution of Middle Georgia College to your development. Middle Georgia College has allowed each of you to expand your horizons and has provided you the opportunity to further your education or improve your skills for a chosen occupation.

There is a lot in common between Middle Georgia College and my own institution, Georgia Tech, and it goes well beyond the fact that we both have Georgia in our name. Both institutions were founded at the same time in the mid 1880's to meet specific educational needs of their communities and the state. It was at this time that Georgia was beginning to understand what it had to do to leave behind the shadow of the Civil War and the days of reconstruction. Far sighted leaders, to whom we owe much today, recognized that education was the key and that technology was a centrally important endeavor if industrial jobs were ever to come to Georgia.

Middle Georgia College, known initially as the College of the New Ebenezer Association, gradually assumed a strong technological focus for its programs. Georgia Tech, known originally as the Georgia School of Technology, was founded specifically to provide a technological education for its students and in so doing to help the state's nascent manufacturing economy.

The commonality in our missions led to an early collaboration, one that has persisted to this day. Over 60 years ago the University System of Georgia sought a college to act as the "test site" for the Regents Engineering Transfer program--a program that allows students to take engineering courses at other Georgia universities and then transfer to Georgia Tech ~~during the junior year~~--Middle Georgia College was chosen as that model college. Because of the success of that initial joint venture, the Regents Engineering Transfer Program has grown to include participants from eight Georgia colleges.

Throughout the intervening 60 years, Middle Georgia College has been among the leaders of Georgia's colleges in the number of students that transfer to Georgia Tech. I am proud to say too that we expect new energy to shortly substantially increase the numbers of students using this option to come to Georgia Tech from Middle Georgia College and I will refer to this again in a moment.

In addition to being a leader in the number of students sent to Georgia Tech, Middle Georgia College is also a leader in the quality of students sent to Georgia Tech. Your students graduate from Tech at a higher rate than those who enter ~~Georgia Tech~~ as freshmen.

The exciting development on the horizon is Middle Georgia College's innovative GAMES program, which we have supported from the outset. GAMES, which stands for the Georgia Academy of Mathematics, Engineering, and Science will enable high achieving high school students concentrating their studies in mathematics, science, or engineering to attain an associate's degree at \_\_\_\_\_ complete Middle Georgia as they ~~attain~~ their high school diploma. We are committed to seeing many of those students come to Georgia Tech for their next degree.

Incidentally, I know a lot of folks like the idea of attending a university after they leave a college. Since Georgia Tech is called an institute, I need to assure you that you won't miss anything by coming to our campus. Recently, just about every four year school in the state tacked on the term "university" to their name, and I began to think about what it took to be a university. Here are two definitions: (1) football "A university is a college with a stadium seating over 40,000." (2) "A university is a repository of knowledge; the freshman come in with a little and the seniors leave with none, so the knowledge accumulates. Because of the last definition does not apply to our students, we are proud to be called an institute, even though we are ranked by US News and World Report as one of the 15 best public universities in the nation.

Whether you graduate from Georgia Tech or Middle Georgia College or a university, college, or combination of the two, technology will be an important part of your future. Twenty years ago, few workplaces used computers. Today, networked computers pervade our society that can access the most arcane information in only a few moments. To find out when Middle Georgia was founded,

I simply logged into the net and used a search engine to find out about your history. It took me about five minutes, and I could have done it faster if I were a better internet pilot. I also made the mistake of getting curious, which happens a lot on the internet. When I asked for colleges and universities in Georgia, the net told me I had two choices. One was the State of Georgia, and the other the Republic of Georgia. At first I wondered if that Texan who escaped the shootout recently and believed in the Republic of Texas had reached Georgia and set up a web site. Then I realized it was the Georgia in Russia. I had to take a peak and that took time.

Just five years ago, at most colleges and universities across America, classes consisted exclusively of the teacher lecturing and the students listening. Today, the use of high-tech educational technologies is enabling professors and students to expand the learning process beyond the traditional classroom. At Georgia Tech, classes can be taken over the Internet, course materials are placed on the web and in some classrooms notes are taken on pads that send the information directly to the student computers in their residence hall rooms. More is around the corner as all of our entering students in the future will be required to have a computing system and they can plug into one of the world's highest speed networks, FutureNet, that reaches every residence hall room on campus.

On a more global level, technology has changed the way we harvest our foods, fight wars, combat disease, move from place to place, and much more. In fact, there is not much in this world that has not been affected by technology.

A little more than 30 years ago, John F. Kennedy spoke about the power of technology. During his inaugural address, he called for nations to lay down their instruments of war and violence and said, "Let both sides seek to invoke the wonders of science instead of its terrors. Together let us explore the stars, conquer the deserts, eradicate disease, tap the ocean depths, and encourage the arts and commerce."

At Georgia Tech, the wonders of science are explored on a daily basis and we are seeking to focus on the human dimension of technology. For example:

1. An 80-year old grandmother in rural Georgia can have her blood pressure and pulse rate monitored and receive comforting words or a diagnosis from a doctor or nurse--- all without leaving the comfort of her own home. How? Through telemedicine technology developed at Georgia Tech.

*Pause*

2. In addition, developments in science and engineering are giving new hope to patients with diabetes through construction of an artificial pancreas to eliminate the diabetics' need for daily insulin. ~~In addition, innovations in tissue engineering and genetic analysis give victims infected with the HIV virus hope for longer and better lives.~~ How? Through biotechnology studies at Georgia Tech.

As the leaders of tomorrow, it will be your responsibility to continue to lend the human dimension to technology...to measure progress not by its technological innovations, but by the good that it does for humankind

3. Even in space you'll find tech people solving problems. This morning when the shuttle *Atlantis* <sup>5</sup> *reached* *orbit* *—*

and our fellow travelers on this great blue spaceship we call earth.

*Is it a shame that Commander*

In a Georgia Tech commencement speech, retired Senator and former Georgia Tech student Sam Nunn once said, "Someone must give shape and purpose to our technology and breathe soul into our knowledge...Technology must empower, not threaten our citizens."

That someone should be you. As students who have proven themselves to be high achievers and leaders, the future rests on your shoulders.

In closing, I would once again like to congratulate you. Success in the college setting is a frequent indicator of success in later life, and it has been my pleasure to speak to you as you continue your journey toward a successful and bright future.

Thank you, and again, congratulations.